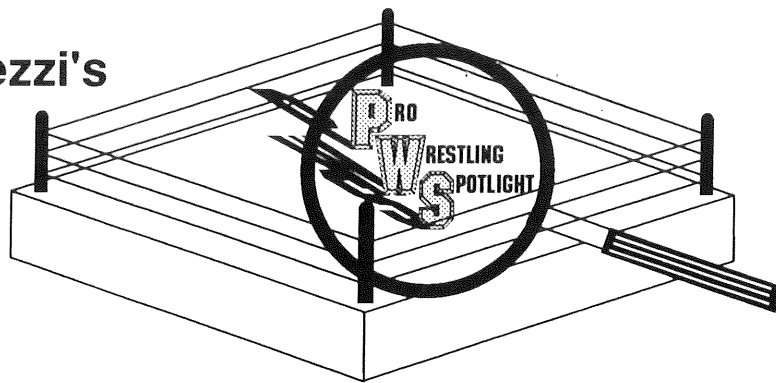




New Sex Scandal About to Rock WWF Boat???

by Editor John Arezzi

A new allegation brought forth by a 15 year old New York boy may bring the WWF sex scandals back in the mainstream media. This past Sunday on the KVEG Wrestle Talk Radio Show hosted by Bill Kunkle and Ric Carter, a youngster only identified as "Barney" came forward with claims of an attack on him in 1991 by former WWF "occasional laborer" Mel Phillips. To make matters worse, the 15 year old youngster also accused the WWF's Vince McMahon of "planting him" in the audience of the Phil Donahue show of March 17th, promising him satisfaction if he kept quiet, and, if the boy would trash certain panelists on that show.

This writer has been aware of this story since May 24th, 1992, when I was the 1st wrestling journalist "Barney" contacted. He felt there was no one to turn to. I did not initially report on this story, but rather, tried to steer the youngster to the proper authorities. In the weeks that followed the initial call to me, "Barney" spoke to various people, and hired an attorney, who is no longer associated with the case.

I have now decided to print the conversation of May 24th with "Barney", who phoned me after my radio show of that evening, which featured Lee Cole (brother of Tom Cole, who settled with the WWF over a similar situation) and Murray Hodgson, who has brought suit against the WWF for wrongful termination of employment. The conversation was on the record and recorded with "Barney's" consent.

"Barney": I want to talk to you about what's happening in the WWF. Basically, in January of 1991 I was at Nassau (Coliseum) with my Boy Scout troop. One of the boy scouts had written an essay on why he wanted to meet his favorite wrestler, and it won, and the scouts got to meet two wrestlers...we met Tugboat and Kerry...Adkisson (Von Erich), I got a really cool picture of that. And, um, basically I wanted to meet Bret Hart because he was in the main event. I went over to Adkisson (Von Erich) and said "is there any way I could meet other wrestlers?". He said to talk to on the bigger businessmen, Mel Phillips, and I said I didn't know who he was.

After the intermission, while Lombardi vs. Hillbilly Jim was going on, I found Mel Phillips and stuff happened....

JA: What did he do?

"Barney": I went, "Mr. Phillips, I met Mr. Adkisson in the green room, and he said if I talk to you I could meet wrestlers." And, he went "well, how much is it worth to you?" I went, "I don't have any money, I'm...a kid". He said, "There are other things you could do." I said, "like what?" He said, "like favors." I said, "what do you mean?"

JA: How old are you now?

"Barney": I'm 15 now, last year I was 14, um, and so, (very nervously) basically, he like did things that weren't too....

JA: He did things to you, you didn't want done.

"Barney": Yeah. So, I called up Titan Sports a couple of weeks afterward, and I wanted to report him, to see if something could be done, but I didn't want to tell my parents, because that would have gotten into a much greater argument. I called and said this guy did this to me at a Nassau show and is there some way that action could be taken against him. They said, "yeah sure, we'll look into it." They never got back to me. Then this whole big thing came out, with the big scandal and I called there again when I realized I wasn't the only person this had happened to...they said, Vince McMahon was going to be in the city for Donahue, why don't you talk to Mr. McMahon, cause he's the guy in charge of the WWF, and maybe he could help you in some way. I went down to the Donahue show...I got there about noon and I met Mr. McMahon. He said he would talk to me after the show, and he told me to go on the show and bash the people on the stage...do him a favor and he would do me a favor after the show.

JA: He said that to you? Your the kid that was in the audience that said that stuff about Barry O. and Bruno's kid. They told you to say that?

"Barney": Yeah. He like...told me things about what had happened in the past...He told me to say that, then after the show for doing him that favor, he'd try to get stuff done because at that point Phillips had already resigned. He said that I might be able to get a job at Titan Sports, if I were just quiet...my mom and I were having problems, and this was a good idea, because maybe I could get a job...He said he would speak to me after the show. After the show I went over to him...he was on the stage...Murray Hodgson had said something to him. I said, "Mr. McMahon, about what you said before...if something could be done...go through the company." He said to speak to Steve Planamenta. So I called up there. He said he never had heard of me, and that I was making these things up, and that I should go crawl back under the rock I came out of.

JA: That was the last conversation you had with them?

"Barney": That was about two days after the Donahue Show.

JA: Can I get a little personal with you?

"Barney": Yeah.

JA: What did Mel do to you?

"Barney": Um, he...Well there were four matches after the intermission before the Bret Hart match. And he said

the Hart Foundation would be in the building after the match, so there would be no problem so I should wait. So, then he took me out to a car that was parked in the parking lot. He said there would be time between the actual Hart Foundation match and I would get to meet Bret Hart after the match. So, um, like...he took all my clothes off and, um, he performed oral sex on me.

At the time of this conversation, "Barney's" parents were unaware of what their son claimed happened to him. They are now aware of his accusations.

I had initially planned on not making this conversation public, but, with the apparent imminent stories and rumors that will probably be circulated since the radio appearance, I decided to print the conversation (with Barney's consent), and welcome any response from Titan Sports and Vince McMahon.

My only hope is that the truth will come out from the accuser and the accused.

Remembering The "Nature Boy"

By Donny Laible

It's difficult to comprehend, "Nature Boy" Buddy Rogers is gone. What a kind soul he was. Over the years, while he was in wrestling and long since his departure from the sport, there have been many imitators, but none equaled his talents. As with everyone who entertains the public, individuals have their own, private memories shared and treasured concerning the performers. Before extending my personal observations of the man known as "The Body Beautiful" in his heyday, I thought several facts of his career would be of interest to you.

Now, as best as I was able to research, Rogers' pro debut occurred on July 18, 1942 in Atlantic City, New Jersey, just a pop fly away from his home town of Camden. For you trivia buffs, Eddie King was Buddy's opposition and the contest resulted in a time-limit draw.

As for his first appearance in Camden, New Jersey, that took place about three months later on October 12, 1942. Teaming with future promoter Ace Freeman, Rogers and his partner had their hands raised in victory at the expense of Jack Vansky and Angelo Savoldi.

At the time of these matches, the ring name Buddy Rogers hadn't come to be. Born Herman Rohde, known to many as Dutch. During his pro debut he was billed as Dutch Rohe. Next came his using Rohde, and finally hitting super stardom as "Nature Boy" Buddy Rogers. It was in such east coast cities as Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington DC, Newark and New York City where Rogers served the majority of his mat apprenticeship.

Many of the wrestlers we think of today as legends were foes throughout the 1940's to Buddy. LeRoy McGuirk, Danny McShain, Kola Kwariani (Antonio Rocca's manager years later) and so on. By the 50's, Buddy became the man the fans came to see him beat. It's been

said that one of the "Nature Boy's" strongest assets in the ring was his mastering the important art of timing in working holds.

When booked in the mid-west for Chicago Promoter Fred Kohler, Rogers headlined major shows drawing incredible attendance figures. In 1951 Buddy challenged then National Wrestling Alliance World Champion Lou Thesz on a number of occasions. One of their meetings took place on January 26 of that year in the International Amphitheater with ex-plug Jack Dempsy serving as the referee. The result was a draw. They also battled in Wrigley Field that year and I'm sure there were also other matches between them.

Of course winning the NWA's heavyweight crown from then Champion Pat O'Connor on June 30, 1961 in Chicago's Comiskey Park in a two out of three falls encounter is one of two Rogers matches most veteran fans recall. At the time the title match set attendance and receipt records - drawing 39,000 fans and ringing up \$142,000.

Considered to have one of the finest physiques in wrestling, Buddy was at one time hooked up with Vince McMahon Sr. who was his personal manager working out of DC's Franklin Park Hotel. Bobby Davis became perhaps most famous when becoming Buddy's ringside "mouthpiece." The Ridgewood Grove Arena, Sunnyside Gardens and Madison Square Garden were regular stops for him in NYC.

And in 1960, when tickets ranged from \$2.00 to \$4.00 on shows promoted by New Jersey's Willie Gilzenberg, Rogers teamed in many tag contests with Johnny Valentine. Rogers' reign as champion concluded on May 17, 1963 when Bruno Sammartino scooped him up into a back-breaker and was handed the strap. There were to be a few more matches for Buddy in the late 1970's and early 80's, once retiring from a full-time booking schedule. Managing Jimmy Snuka then teaming with him against Don Muraco and Lou Albano, plus hosting "Rogers' Corner" (a pilot for future Piper's Pits) during World Wrestling Federation telecasts in 1983 and a year or so later providing color commentating during Verne Gagne's Pro Wrestling USA TV package.

In the past eight months wrestling has lost several greats - Dick the Bruiser, Wilbur Snyder, Ripper Collins and Gene Anderson come to mind. But, Buddy Rogers! To me, guys like him, Thesz and "Killer" Kowalski were always going to be around. I feel fortunate to have met him at last years Weekend Of Champions convention. He looked in better physical shape than guys twenty years his junior. Buddy remained in the hotel lobby late each evening signing autographs, talking to fans of all ages, not one hint of conceit was ever displayed. I believe Buddy had as much fun greeting his public as they did coming face to face with him. Thank goodness for memories, I have only good ones of Buddy.

WEEKEND OF CHAMPIONS T O O UPDATE

Several names have been confirmed for the third annual Weekend of Champions wrestling fans convention, promoted by Pro Wrestling Spotlight, to be held Saturday August 29th and Sunday August 30th, 1992 at The Ramada Hotel at LaGuardia Airport, Elmhurst, Queens, New York.

Just add to the list are:

Japanese Superstar
Jushin Thunder Liger
Larry Zbyszko
Jimmy Valiant
Captain Lou Albano
Ivan Koloff

Already Scheduled:

2-Time WWF Champion
"Living Legend" Bruno Sammartino
Killer Kowalski
Jerry "The King" Lawler
"Hotstuff" Eddie Gilbert
2-Time Woman's Champ Wendy Richter
Nikolai Volkoff
possible surprise WCW guest

Next week the final names will be announced.

"Super Ticket" packages are on sale at \$75 for The Weekend, which gets you admission both days, autographs of all the stars, 8X10 photos of all the stars, a souvenir T-shirt, a souvenir program, an 11X14 lithograph of all the stars, guaranteed seating for the Saturday night Q & A session with the stars, plus early admission to the convention. No waiting on long lines. Only 200 Super Ticket packages are available. You should order your package before August 1. They are going fast and once they are gone, additional super tickets will not be issued. Call John Arezzi at (516)587-2861 to reserve your Super Ticket.

Once again, the celebrity auction will take place on Sunday afternoon. Among the great items that will be available will be a **full ring costume from Jushin Thunder Liger**.

There is also two bus trips in the planning stages for the Friday and Saturday night. Both will be presented by Larry Sharpe and Dennis Coraluzzo's Monster Factory. Friday night will be a tribute to the late Buddy Rogers, with the feature match being Eddie Gilbert vs. Bob Orton Jr.

The matches for Saturday are still being set at this time, but scheduled to appear are Jerry Lawler, Eddie Gilbert and from Japan Kendo Nagasaki. Watch future issues for additional information on these great matches.

The Ramada Hotel is holding a LIMITED NUMBER of discounted rooms for those people coming in for The Weekend. Call (718)446-4800 and ask for Dominic Agate to reserve your room.

Dealer tables are available for \$100 for one day and \$175 for both days. There are only 15 tables left so call John Arezzi today to reserve your table.

Early purchase of Super Tickets, and early reservations of dealer tables are recommended. The earlier you buy your Super Ticket the earlier you will be let in, and the earlier you reserve your table, the better spot you'll get in the Ballroom.

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Pro Wrestling Spotlight Interview With Dave Meltzer

Part 3

This is the third installment of the interview we conducted with the top pro wrestling journalist in the country, Dave Meltzer. In this issue Dave talks about other newsletters, steroids, and the wrestling media.

PWS: The Wrestling Observer is pretty much considered by everyone inside the business THE main source of inside information. It has spawned some imitators, as well as some fine publications which cover wrestling. What is your opinion of some of the other sheets. Do you have any favorites? Does anything annoy you about the others?

DM: Well, the only thing I hate is when people lump us together. Some people say "the sheets say this, the sheets say that." I consider myself an individual, and a breed apart from most of the other newsletters. There are a few others I really respect. But, when someone says, "I read this in the sheets, ha ha ha", and they try to paint us all with the same brush. That gets to me. I think that Wade Keller does a fantastic job with The Pro Wrestling Torch. I really enjoy reading it, and I think he is going to have thousands of readers before too long. I'm really glad for him because he's paid his dues. He's stayed up to four and six o'clock in the morning putting the thing together. He's incredibly dedicated, and he's super sharp. Alex Marvez's journalistic ethics are better than 90% of the other journalists that I've dealt with over the years. So, I respect him too. His newsletter, as it develops, should do fine. The others have their niche, like the comedy newsletters and the results newsletters. Georgiann Markopoulos does her deal, which is different from the rest, and she has her audience too. But, I look forward to The Torch, and Alex's newsletter. I look forward to reading them every week.

PWS: You have gotten much praise for your work over the years. Recently, you've also received a lot of criticism over your Donohue Show appearance. A lot of people said you weren't tough enough on WWF head, Vince McMahon. How do you respond to these critics?

DM: It's a valid point. I can see where people are coming from. A lot of people don't know Vince McMahon. For better or for worse, I do. I have dealt with him on a decent amount over the past year. It was a weird situation. On the Donohue Show, there were a lot of people who wanted me to do to Vince McMahon what Murray Hodgson did to him, and they felt like this could do some major damage to Vince and the WWF. First of all, it wouldn't. Whatever was going to happen on the Donohue show was an hour of entertainment for most people, and that's all it was going to be. I was there to learn, and I knew what

I was going to do going in. I did what I had planned on doing. Looking back in hindsight, there were plenty of things that maybe I would have done different. I just watched a tape of the show yesterday, because I was dubbing it for a friend in Japan. I hadn't seen it in a few months. I really looked at it.

John, you and I were there, and very few others. very few people knew the atmosphere, who knew what was going on. I knew there were going to be people who were going to go wild, like Billy Graham. For me, I felt the most important thing was to try to deal with the issues with some credibility, because too many people were going to look at that show and see huge wrestlers yelling and screaming, and think they were trying to work some wrestling angle. I felt coming off as credible was the most important thing. Another thing was that before the show, Ed Glavine, Donohue's producer, made the point to spend as much time on the sex stuff, and as little on the steroid issue as possible. I had all these steroid documents, and I couldn't bring any of them out there. I had plenty of steroid stuff, but the sex stuff, hey I didn't know. I don't know the truth there. I talked to a lot of people, and I have an idea of some of the stuff that came out. Some of the charges that are out there I believe there is truth to them, some of them, I don't know. I can't say to Vince McMahon, hey you knew for twenty years what was going on, that kids were being abused and you laughed at it. People wanted me to say that, but I didn't know that. When the steroid stuff came out I got aggressive. Donohue wanted to control the show. There were a couple of points that were made on that issue. A couple of times I started to talk and Phil just didn't go to me. During that steroid thing I just wanted to talk talk talk. That's the subject that I had researched. I don't think enough was devoted to it. I think that lumping the two issues into one show wasn't fair. I think there should have been one show on one subject (sex scandals) and one on the other (steroids).

You can't cover the steroid issue in fifteen minutes. You need a show to talk about the social ramifications. You have got to completely re-educate the steroids. There's profit for pushing guys on steroids. People should understand what these guys are doing to themselves to look like that, and care, which is the second thing. A lot of people who know don't care. They look at wrestlers like they're non persons, but rather entertainment figures. They haven't seen a Billy Graham. For all the criticism he's taken, the fact is this guy is suffering really bad. There's a lot of guys in this business that may end up the same way. I don't want to see anyone end up like that. For all they want to paint Billy Graham as, and he's not what they say, one of the things is he doesn't want the other guys to end up like him. To be 40-45 years old, and have to live another 25 years the way he has to live is sad.

PWS: The steroid issue really gets you going. It's sad that it's so difficult to get the respect for covering such an important story because "it's only pro wrestling".

DM: Well, the one thing that this whole topic has done, including the Zahorian trial, is given the wrestling media a chance to shine. I think a few people have really developed a name from their coverage of it. It was a difficult issue, and it required a lot of thinking and a lot of understanding. I think the wrestling media did a heck of a better job than those covering track or college football, and other sports on this issue. The wrestling media just hammered at it until Vince McMahon, and Kip Frey had to address it. Titan Sports just wanted to ignore the Zahorian trial. But they couldn't ignore it. The fact is, if it weren't for the wrestling media, the topic wouldn't be addressed. The wrestling media has a bigger influence in the business than ever before. I think that's very positive.

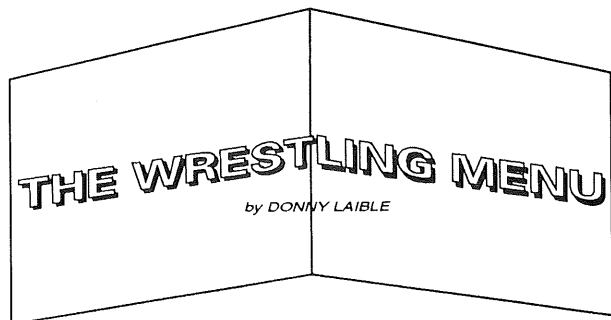
PWS: What is the future of *The Wrestling Observer* and Dave Meltzer?

DM: I'm thrilled to death that things are the way they are right now. I don't think about things changing. I really like the way my life is going, and the way *The Observer* is going. I still get a kick out of writing it. I think that the people that read it, enjoy it. That's the whole idea. I hope people buy it, and learn from it. I don't see any changes, but I'd like to see more of this type of reporting done in the wrestling business. I used to think that when covering these issues in wrestling, I was the lone voice in the wind, but now there are many, many publications out there, which I think is a very good thing. I'd like to see the other wrestling media move into 1992, and not try to think it's still 1977. Some of them have, and some of them haven't. The ones who haven't are missing out on a lot of things.

PWS: Do you think there will be a time when there is a newsstand publication like the *Observer*?

DM: I'm totally sock that there isn't one out there already. You would think that a publication like *The Observer* would almost tell you that it should happen. I don't know why publishers haven't had writers do any real books on wrestling. There are people willing to write them. It would make fascinating copy. There might be ten million wrestling fans in this country. Not all of them would buy a book. But I tell you, there are plenty of people that, with the right promotion, and there was a book telling them what went on behind the scenes, would buy a book. I think that for every reader of the *Observer*, there has got to be up to a hundred people that if they had any idea a book like that existed, would buy it. If something with little or no publicity, but just a lot of word of mouth, a radio show can be a success, tells me, that an insider magazine, with publicity, and good distribution, and proper marketing, would shoot past all the other wrestling magazines on the newsstands. With the exception of a few. The *WWF* magazine has that great network to promote it, and, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* has a 12 year head start. You couldn't overtake that one so easily. The other smaller magazines that have no niche, they're just trying to

cheaply and poorly do what Bill Apter does. If the other magazines tried to change their format and went to a totally legitimate format, they'd do very well. They'd have a cult following.



And why may you ask am I so pumped up with excitement? I received a "care package" from my good buddy Boyd Pierce, who has arguably been one of the most colorful and informative wrestling announcers for five decades. Many of the old programs he sent me brought back some great memories from the early 1908's. Much of what you'll be reading in this column will be connected in some fashion to that era.

Let's begin with a trivia teaser - Wrestler Mike Hall attained considerable fan recognition in the WWF during the mid-70's, what name was he billed as? Bet you didn't know Black Jack Mulligan was born in Roscoe, Texas and played for the Roscoe Plowboys Prep football team in Odesa, Texas for Hayden Frye, who went on to become Iowa's head football coach. Sticking with the Texas football-pro wrestling connection, during three seasons (1974-76), Tully Blanchard was the starting quarterback for the West Texas State team.

Here's another example of, "Boy, how times have changed." On the December 13, 1981 Meadowlands card, in the opening match Johnny Rodz pinned "Kurt" Henning. Speaking of "Java" Rodz, on a Brooklyn, NY card in late 1980 he was billed on the WWF poster as the Brooklyn Champion, as well as Manuel Soto earning the billing as Puerto Rican Titleist...And you thought the Federation had only two singles belts back then.

Manager Jimmy Hart, who is roughly 45 years old, for those of you who don't know, once was a "big deal" in the music industry. Although he wasn't the lead singer, Hart's band, The Gentry's recording in 1965 *Keep On Dancing*, sold more than a million copies...Has anyone out there seen or spoken to former NWA referee Scrappy McGowan?... "Fabulous" Frank Monte and Bob Roop were two of my favorites, a couple of decades ago. The first time Monte entered the WWF, I was convinced that he and Goldie Rogers were one in the same - hey, you can't get 'em all right.

Now I know many of you may have a difficult time making a mental picture of Lord Al Hayes wrestling. Let's take this thought one step beyond. In Toronto's Maple Leaf Gardens in January, 1982, his Lordship was matched against Johnny Weaver in a cage as the semi-main event.

Somehow I have to believe Hayes chuckled throughout his "suck-sessful" outing. If you remember in 1976 when Washington Redskins Coach George Allen courted Andre The Giant's massive frame to be his offensive line, you'll get the Mike Hall quiz.

When Jim Duggan worked in the Mid-Atlantic territory for Crockett, he was billed as "The Ax"...So, you think you've heard it all as far as promotional ways to label a match, not so fast. In Manitoba, there was a "No DQ Teacher's Strap Match." This one requires further thought...By a vote of yeh or neh, wasn't Tony Rocco damn underrated?...Hillbilly Jim is the southwest representative of Coliseum Video. I'm told he's one hell of a salesman...If all the readers of this newsletter got ten bucks for every wrestler from the States who has been given the ring name *Strongbo*, by South African promoters, all our transportation to the *Weekend Of Champions Convention* this summer would be paid for.

Rocky Johnson wrestled at times wearing a mask - known as Sweet Ebony Diamond. Rocky is living in Tampa, Florida...How about bringing back The Love Brothers, Hartford and Reginald, to feud with the Beverly's?...WCW is a great promotion, but in calling itself World, I think the NWA would be far more fitting. Everything about their Saturday night show screams out, "I'm a regional southern promotion!"...Watched Tom Zenk take several shots to his jaw from Bob Cook on TV this weekend and sold NOTHING! Where's the believability boys?

The Ladies International Wrestling Association is making plans for their 7th annual convention. Assistance is being sought from anyone who is interested in sponsoring a lady wrestler. Convention headquarters will be at the Dunes Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. Phone (602)820-1891 or write Mae Young-16139 Via Arriba, San Lorenzo, CA 94580 for details.

\$1.50 will get you a copy of the Wrestling Flyer newsletter-P.O. Box 283, Wallingford, PA 19086. The bi-weekly fanzine is crammed with news and pictures covering all the independents, plus the "big two." Each issue is promised to be accompanied with a high quality color print. Pete's Place-P.O. Box 31747, Philadelphia, PA 19147 or call (215)462-4215 has more than 30,000 wrestling photos for sale. If you haven't tried The Wrestling Chatterbox yet, what are you waiting for? For \$2.50 an issue - Georgiann Markopoulos, 23-44 30th Drive, Astoria, NY 11102-3252 gives you the latest news and offers contests.

Remember, I'm always anxious to hear from you on what ever is on your mind concerning wrestling. Donny Laible - P.O. Box 443, Ilion, NY 13357. Oh yeah-Mike Hall - He went as German-Otto Von Heller.

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**Join the Booster Club today! See page 11
for all the details!**

On The Outside Looking In

By Jon Maxian

Been buried alive lately? Bitten by a King Cobra over the weekend? Suffering from a mild case of Voodoo causing emissions of black goo, and pea soup hurling? Welcome to what has become the WWF.

You would think, with all the bad publicity, (steroid and sexual abuse allegations), that Vince McMahon would take his promotion back in a direction that made it skyrocket in the first place. Think back to the Rock & Wrestling Connection that brought pro wrestling into the mainstream and made wrestling truly family entertainment, earning himself the title as a "genius of marketing." Hulk Hogan attained demi-god status with the kids and brought every closet fan into the light.

But alas, where has it gone? I know wrestling is like baseball in the respect that no matter what, you can't destroy it. People want to see it and will forgive and for the most part, forget. Stain of shock treatment forcing parents to reinforce the aspect of fact and fantasy to avoid nightmares.

Vince, when are you gonna wake up? After the empire has totally crumbled? Why don't you start cleaning up your act before it's too late. Why don't you try subsidizing local promotions, grooming potential status for the big show instead of destroying them. It's not too late to turn it around. Remember the WWF could end up as the DWF, (Dead Wrestling Federation). Without fans, you're nowhere! Think of the kids Vince! Think of the kids!

B-UDDY THE WORLDS CHAMP ROGERS, IS CALLED
"NATURE BOY"

U-AND I AGREE, HE IS THE REAL McCOY
D-O NOT UNDERESTIMATE HIS VERSATILE ABILITY
D-OING A GREAT PERFORMANCE, HAS SENT MANY A ONE
SILLY

Y-OUNG OR OLD, MALE AND FEMALE, CONTINUE TO BOO
OR CHEER

N-EVER A DULL MOMENT, WHEREVER "THE KING" WILL
APPEAR

A-ND IN THIS CORNER, THE ANNOUNCER WILL YELL
T-HE WORLDS CHAMPION BUDDY ROGERS, BEFORE THE
BELL

U-NLIKE THE OTHER PERFORMERS, HE'S A MASTER OF
THE ART

R-EVOLUTIONIZING WRESTLING, FROM THE VERY START
E-VERYONE KNOWS HIS ANTICS, BUT IN THE END HE'S ON
HIS FEET

B-ECAUSE YEARS OF HARD TRAINING, HAS PROVEN TOO
TOUGH TO BEAT

O-'CONNOR WE ALL KNOW, WAS A GUY HARD TO DOWN
Y-ET OUR OWN BUDDY ROGERS, NOW WEARS THE
HIGHEST CROWN

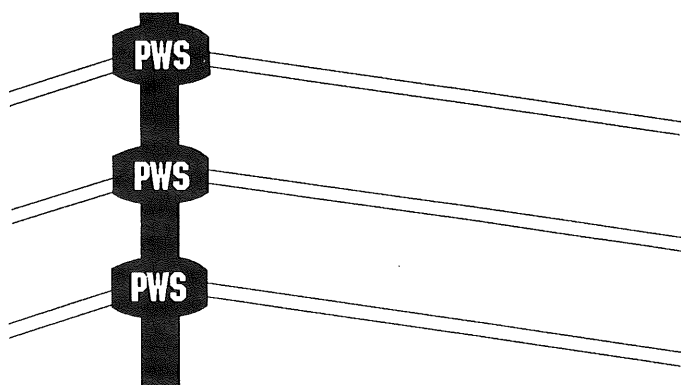
R-IGHT OR WRONG YOU CAN'T DENY, HIS BODY IS UNIQUE
O-N AND ON HE'LL ALWAYS GO, BECAUSE HE'S AT HIS
PEAK

G-REAT CHAMPIONS ARE FEW, IN THIS MODERN DAY AND
AGE

E-VEN IN ALL OTHER SPORTS, ON TV OR ON THE STAGE
R-EMEMBER YEARS AGO IN BASEBALL, SHOUTING FOR
GIL HODGES

S-O REMEMBER YOUR HERO TODAY, NONE OTHER THAN
BUDDY ROGERS

And in this Corner.....



Send your comments to: And in this Corner...,
c/o Pro Wrestling Spotlight Productions, 136 N. Carll
Avenue, Suite 125, Babylon, NY 11702

Boy, did you people miss it! Sure, you may have listened to the Pro Wrestling Spotlight's last live remote, but how many of you were actually there? I was in attendance to meet Missy Hyatt, the Lightning Kid, and Jason Hervey. It really shocked me that there were only a hundred or so people there, because of the fact that the admission was free, and John Arezzi had imported some fun guests. Well, I was there, and I'm going to let you guys out there know what happened, so you'll wise up and attend a live remote the next time one is scheduled.

My friend Rakeem and I arrived at Scores about an hour early, so we could get the scoop, and check out what Missy would be wearing before the masses. Unfortunately, Missy was off on a shopping spree with Jason, and was long gone. The Kid, too, had flown the coop in the search of food. Anyway, we walked into the bar, and amidst the music, women, and televisions, we found John Arezzi, recognizing him from his appearance on the Donohue show. We walked over, and introduced ourselves. We had both called into John's show numerous times. John, pleased that we could now annoy him in person, rather than via telephone, spoke to us about several upcoming angles, including the Summer Scam Main Event - Randy Savage VS Ultimate Warrior (The Ultimate Rerun) and the proposed push of Ron Simmons, which sent Rakeem fleeing to the bathroom in nausea. John also mentioned the upcoming convention, telling me that he

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wanted to bring Jushin Liger over. I immediately wondered how Rakeem, the New York slang dictionary would communicate with the non-English speaking star.

We sat down to eat. During this time, more and more fans came in, and eventually drifted to us, speaking about and asking opinions on different topics. Several students of Johnny Rodz' school complained about the way they were being taught. It was then that I noticed the Lightning Kid across the room. I introduced myself. I immediately noticed how soft spoken the Kid was, in comparison to his television interviews. I spoke to him briefly about how he got into the business, jealous of the fact that he turned pro at sixteen, while I hadn't even discovered where to get the hard core information when I was that age!

It was just then that Jason and Missy walked in. Every guys attention was turned onto Missy, and several waitresses looked adoringly at Jason, even as I noticed how short Hervey was. He was shorter than me, and I'm five foot two. Everyone lined up to get an autograph and a complimentary hello. Missy mentioned that an angle with her and Madusa stripping was not her idea. I floated around the table, trying to decide where to stay put in order to hear the best one-liners that Missy said. I became engaged in a conversation with another fan my age. Rakeem left to fawn over Missy, and I noticed the Kid flash over the Neo-Geo arcade game. I felt bad that all the attention was going to Missy, and tried to talk to the Kid about the business, because he was the wrestler, and Missy was only a commentator. Not that Missy isn't great and all, but I have more respect for someone in the ring, rather than at the commentary table.

My new found friend, William, and I sat down and watched some soundless Bill Watts UWF bouts. The Blazers game was on, on the other television sets, so while The Freebirds brawled with Sting, we heard commentators screaming for dunk shots. A side note - by the end of the night, we had seen Steve Williams pin Big Bubba Rogers for the UWF belt so many times it became a running (bad) joke. Several fans also began doing some commentary, outdoing the comedy of Bobby Heenan and the controversy of Paul E. Dangerously. You should have heard some of the insults tossed at Brad Armstrong and Tim Horner.

As I noted how good Missy looked on an old UWF clip, I noticed Jason watching the tape from an opposite table. We began a long conversation with Jason about the state of wrestling today. He was very honest as we talked about WCW's lack of discretion, Dusty Rhodes, Joel Goodhart, Jim

Herd, Eddie Gilbert, and his godfather, Terry Funk. I thank Jason for being honest, even though I didn't expect several off-color remarks which made me wish I had a tape recorder with me, because when I later told several friends that didn't attend, they accused me of making it up.

As we talked, Rakeem reappeared love struck, and several others joined us. Missy strutted over, strategically placing herself on Jason's lap. Jason excused himself, and the two left to see John. I can't blame him for leaving the table. Would you rather be with fans, or Missy?

The two newcomers to the group introduced themselves as Brian and TJ. We started discussions on every topic imaginable - the pitiful Papa Shango angle, Japan, the NWA tourney, and managers. One of the funnier moments happened when I mentioned the time Paul E. Dangerously was kissed on the lips by the late Bruiser Brody. We all looked at each other, and burst out laughing at the memory, then had to explain to Rakeem what the incident was. We moved to the front as technicians readied the radio show for broadcast. Alex Marvez appeared, and joined John, Jason, Missy and the Kid in a roundtable type setting for the show,

The show's hour flew by way too soon. We all went wild and I tried to get in as many one-liners on the air as possible. Highlights of the show included Missy asking our little group if we had gone on a date in the past two years after a collective "Whoooo" for Madusa. Alex accidentally sparked a tirade against Eddie Gilbert from Jason after mentioning recent comments "Hot Stuff" made on Memphis TV. Some female with a Russian accent called in, and asked the dumbest questions on the air since the last time Dave from Staten Island graced the airwaves. The show was great, with the only exception being some fool calling into announce Vince "Loser"

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HARDCORE HEAVEN

Change Is The Constant

JEFFREY COHEN

Change is the one constant in World Championship Wrestling. Marks are lucky. They see a new champion and say, "Oh, when did *he* win the title?" Hardcores have to suffer the whole arc that precipitated the title change: the new booker coming in, the phasing down of the old champ, the tremendous push of the new regime's favorites, and finally the belt swap.

Because of the tremendous financial burden, change is more prevalent than ever before in professional entertainment. If a baseball coach is not successful within a certain amount of time, attendance goes down and/or star players are unhappy, the coach is fired. If a television show gets low ratings, it doesn't matter if Eddie Murphy or Carson Productions packaged the program -- it's history. When a motion picture studio releases a string of flops that are sure to make the Board of Directors in New York unhappy, the Studio President is cooked. When a wrestling promoter fails to draw at houses and the TV ratings droop, he's a goner.

Examples: Davey Johnson of the New York Mets had the highest winning percentage of any Mets manager. Yet when his team became riddled with dissension, he was dismissed. Eddie Murphy Productions has a development deal with CBS. Yet the most recent show (*The Royal Family*) lasted less than one season (Even with Redd Foxx, it was still coming in third in its time slot.). As far as the film studios go, they have so much turnover that I can't even begin to detail the maneuvering.

When there is a change, the first thing that a new supervisor does is evaluate his talent and take action. In baseball, it may mean no change other than who is running the club. The Montreal Expos fired manager Tom Runnels and hired Felipe Alou. The newspapers would have begun whispering in earnest that he was overplaying his son, Moises, in the outfield, if Ivan Calderon was not on the injured list, providing an everyday opening. Moises has responded like Dustin Rhodes, often times proving much-needed spark in a potentially lackluster match. Alou also demoted a rookie (Bret Barberie) Runnels had high hopes for and reassigned Tim Wallach from first base back to third base. The team spirit rose, and they have played better baseball.

When a movie studio changes hands, the first thing the new mogul does is bury as many projects as he can that his predecessor put into motion. Why? Because if they succeed, he can't take the credit for them, and if they fail, people will ask why didn't he cancel *those* bombs. The grappling equivalent occurs every time WCW changes bookers. When George Scott took over from Dusty Rhodes in 1989, he almost canceled the hiring of Brian Pillman. Scott did can Tom Pritchard, ending what could have been a hot heel reign before it began. I believe Pritchard could have been that stopgap heel WCW needed at the top of cards while each booker was busy turning Ric Flair and Lex Luger face/heel and vice-versa.

This all has to do with Bill Watts and what everyone is anticipating he'll do with championships now that he has power over title changes in WCW. From *Beach Blast*, he has already contradicted himself by saying on one hand that he is a great believer in light heavyweights, and then giving the belt to Scott Flamingo, who in no way deserves it.

Then there is Rick Rude, losing 4 falls to 3 to Rick Steamboat, but keeping the U.S. title because minutes before showtime, it seems the IronMan Challenge was turned into a non-title affair. Plus Sting pins Cactus Jack, but the match is non-title as well. Maybe Bill is serious that

belts will only change from now on at house shows. Sure, and maybe the Junkyard Dog would make a swell TV Champion to succeed Steve Austin.

Bill followed Vince McMahon's lead by putting his World (non) title match on the middle of the card. Much as Savage won the WWF title 70 minutes into *WrestleMania*, Sting beat Jack 70 minutes into *Beach Blast*. Unfortunately, because of the Jack-Steamboat angle which had to be run, the last match was the uneventful Steiners-Terry Gordy/Steve Williams match. Better booking would have been having Steamboat's victory cap the evening, with Paul E. coming out and declaring Rick would get no more title shots. Steamboat would look confused, then get jumped by Jack. The two would brawl as Jim Ross screamed, "This is out of control! We're out of time! Watch *WCW Saturday Night* to find out how this ends!"

Bill believes that less is more; the fewer big shows you have on free TV and PPV, the more people will come out to see the house shows. Absolutely. But the profit margin on the house shows is incredibly thin, whereas the potential for PPV is far greater. Sure, you lose the merchandising sales, but drop the price on the videocassettes and he could recoup some of the loss. Are another 1,500 butts in the seats at the Omni worth sacrificing a 0.8 buyrate for the aborted *Campus Crush* PPV in September?

No mats on the floor is difficult to argue, as there are points for and against them. They sap a little realism, but watching Scott Flamingo take a tentative bump in the PPV opener convinced me the dives out of the ring, etc. are more than worth it. Reinstate the mats. The same goes for the off-the-top ropes moves. The entire point of the six-man tag match was to get that rule over to the crowd. I hate to say it, but *who cares?* Fans are gonna boo a heel because of his character, personality, and intensity of heat produced, not because his elbow drop is more devastating from the additional 14 inches between middle and top rope. Reinstate off-the-top-rope moves.

I have no doubt Bill Watts will produce a better product than Ole and George Scott. His programs may be comparable to Flair's as far as booking goes. Ron Simmons as World Champion may draw better than Sting because more hardcores like Simmons. As I have stated, anything that works which was initiated before Bill took over may be wiped away (hence the rule changes). Let's give him the six months Ole was granted and find out if the Cowboy still has the magic.

TURNBUCKLE NOTES: I have heard talk that a loophole in Ric Flair's contract allows him to walk at any time where he does not hold a WWF title. Which may explain why he is not on the *SummerSlam* card. If Ric is going, look for him to badmouth some babyface who comes out and clocks him. He'll get stretchered, then show up in WCW after September 1st. If Arn Anderson is champ, there's the ready-made feud. I would love a November *Clash* with Flair beating Arn and then retiring. However, if Ric is willing to take the pinfall, how about him challenging Ron Simmons to a title match for *Starrcade*? That sets up Simmons vs. Steve Williams for *SuperBrawl '93*... I will say this for the Simmons as World Champion people. Sting has been on top for so long that he's not fresh in main events. Putting Ron on top allows great series with Steve Austin, Van Vader and Rick Rude. Incidentally, Rude's contract stip guarantees him the WCW World title within the next two years.

Jeff Cohen publishes Fantasy Federation bimonthly for \$1 an issue; \$3 for three issues, c/o 50 Shelley Lane, Great Neck, NY 11023. Send a stamp before Aug. 1 and receive a sample copy for free!

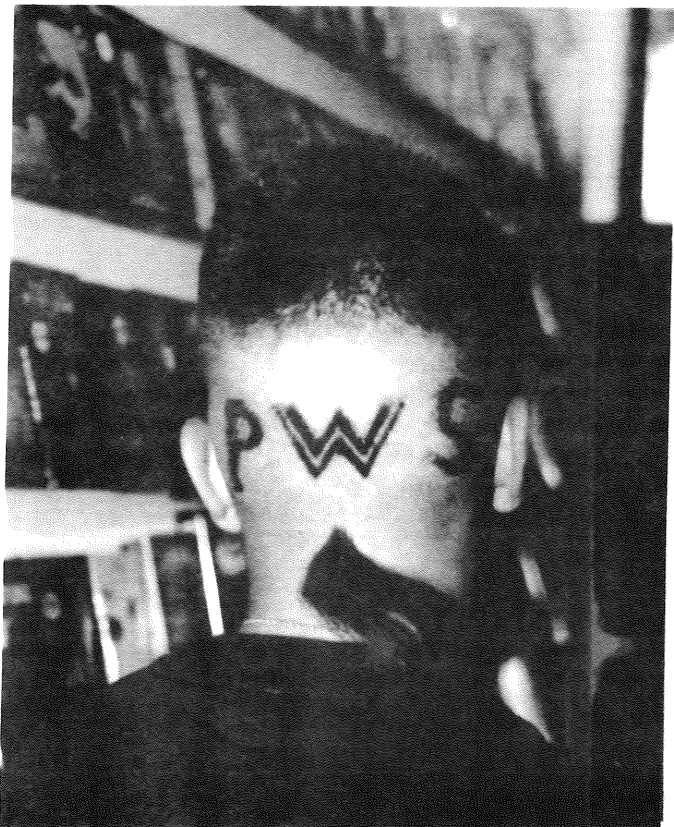


Russo's show, but a chant of "Russo Sucks" ended that garbage. Other than that, the show was, to quote Kurt Henning, "Absolutely Perfect."

Which brings me to my point. You guys have to attend these shows! It gives you the chance to sit there and shoot the breeze with wrestling personalities in ways you can't at a federation promoted autograph signing, or during the call-in show. John Arezzi does all of us a great favor, and he doesn't get the respect he deserves for it. The man puts his neck out to keep us satisfied, yet people insult him for mentioning the Booster Club on every installment of Pro Wrestling Spotlight. These same people would complain should John go off the air. I made a mention that there were a hundred or so people at this show, but I'm sure that I'm off by a bit. No matter. There should have been three times that amount there, and there should be a better turnout for the next remote.

John, I thank you for one of the most fun nights I can remember as a wrestling fan. It outdid the last two years worth of Wrestle Mania's by far. On the air, Alex Marvez said, "Follow John Arezzi - He's the man." John, you are the man, and I look forward to listening and annoying you on the air, going to your events, and being a Booster Club member for many years to come. Thanks.

Mike Johnson



Pro Wrestling Spotlight supporter Greg Illion of New Jersey shows us his new haircut!

Mat Memories

It was 1963. I was 9 years old and already a wrestling fanatic. My grandmother was a fan and got me hooked, which in turn my son, who is 7 years old, is now carrying on the tradition.

In 1963, you couldn't see a Madison Square Garden show if you were under 14 years old. My dad, who knew what to do, took me to a local card at the Brooklyn Roll-a-rama. I could hardly contain my excitement. The undercard was meaningless to me except the main event, the chance of a lifetime at my first live match. A tag team event featuring the legendary Antonio Rocca with Johnny Rubberman Walker against Karl Von Hess and Lenny Montana (Luca Brasi from The Godfather, for those of you too young to remember.) We had ringside seats and my Dad bought a really big book on Wrestling with a red and black soft cover, chock full of bio's on all the wrestlers of that period. I'm sure that book would be worth a lot of money today if I still had it but as it turned out the book didn't last the night.

When Lenny Montana came charging down the aisle, I ran to him before my Dad could stop me I handed him my treasured book to sign. Montana, who seemed to be snorting fire and brimstone grabbed my book and tore it into a thousand pieces and threw it in the air. I was so mad and scared. I ran back to my seat. My Dad was cracking up saying, "Don't worry, I'll buy you another book." Unfortunately, that never happened. I guess they sold out. Everytime Rocca hit and kicked Montana in the face, I felt like he was doing it just for me. Revenge was sweet. Rocca and Walker won, and I was vindicated. I couldn't thank my Dad enough for taking me, and as a souvenir, I have the cardboard poster of that match hanging in my office. A memory that will last me a lifetime.

Jon Maxian

I'll never forget the first time I witnessed a life WWF show. It was in early 1986 in Madison Square Garden. I was only 9 years old and I remember begging my father for weeks before the show to take me. He finally agreed and neither of us were disappointed in the end.

We had terrible seats, (two rows down from the top), but to tell you the truth, I really didn't care. I was just happy to be there at all. I remember my father and I getting to the Garden very early. We were in our seats eating our hot dogs when I noticed Randy Savage and Elizabeth about 30 rows down greeting their fans. I was hoping they would come to where I was sitting, but they didn't.

The first wrestler I saw was Moondog Spot, and I booed him as loud as I could. He lost to Sivi Afi. Remember him? Other results were Bob Orton pinning Pedro Morales, Don Muraco in a double count out with King Tonga (HaKu), and King Kong Bundy splashing Hillbilly Jim. The midgets and the Crush Girls were also on the card. The British Bulldogs and Lou Albano defeated the Dream Team and John Valiant, and in the main event Randy Savage beat Tito Santana in an I-C title bout.

I don't think I'll ever forget that day. There is nothing quite like seeing a wrestling event live. If you've never gone to one, I suggest you go, the first chance you get. The memory from it will last you a lifetime.

Joseph Puccio

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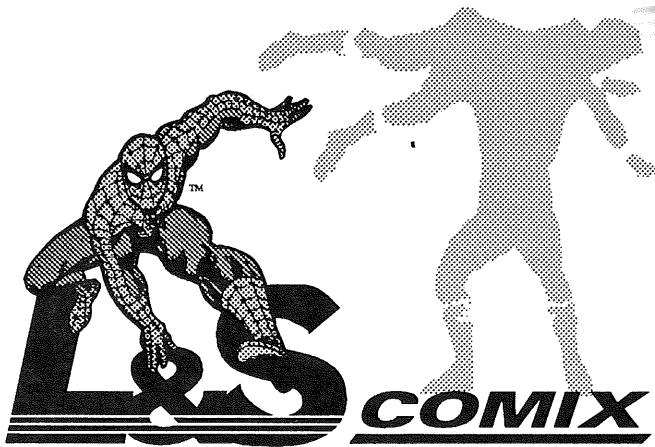
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